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GOD'S LOVE TO MANKIND. *Manifested by disproving his Absolute Decree for their Damnation.*

[Continued from page 56.]

TOUCHING the sacraments, this is also the use and end for which they were ordained; as we may see, *Luke vii. 30. But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of GOD against themselves, being not baptized of John.* In which words is evidently included, that it was GOD's purpose in *John's* baptism to bring them to Christ, and in him to heaven. So much also is said of his baptism, *Mark i. 4. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.* If this were the end of *John's*, much more was it the end of Christ's baptism; it being more excellent than *John's* was, not in substance, but in the fulness of grace administered by it. *All that have been baptized into Christ, saith the apostle, have been baptized into his death, Rom. vi. 3. All ye that have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27.* The very phrases there used, shew that baptism is, in its original intention, an instrument of uniting men to Christ, and giving them communion with him in the benefits of his death. *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, saith our Saviour, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, John. iii. 3. 5.*

VOL. II.



I will

I will shut up this with *Acts ii. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins*; plainly implying, that therefore is baptism ordained to be received, that those who receive it, might have their sins remitted.

This is also GOD's intent in the Lord's supper. *This is my body, saith Christ, and this is my blood, Matt. xxvi. 26. 28.* In those words teaching us, that in that sacrament there is an exhibition of Christ and his benefits intended on GOD's part, and received of those by whom no obstacle is interposed; and therefore doth the apostle call it in express words, *1 Cor. x. 16. The communion of the body and blood of Christ.*

For this end also is the patience of GOD exercised among men, as we may see, *Rom. ii. 4. Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, not knowing that the mercy of GOD leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, heapest up wrath to thyself.* In these words may be noted, 1. GOD's intent in forbearing sins, which is, *the leading of men to repentance*, and so on to salvation: for repentance is by him ordained to salvation, as a means to the end. 2. The persons to whom GOD intendeth this good by his forbearance: and they are such as *despise the riches of his goodness*, and have *hard and impenitent hearts*. 3. The event of this their contempt of GOD's patience, and that is, *a treasuring up of wrath unto themselves against the day of wrath.* Out of all which, laid together, ariseth thus much; that GOD, by sparing wicked men, who have impenitent hearts, intendeth their everlasting good, though they, by the abuse of his patience, and by their refusal to repent, treasure up unto themselves wrath and misery everlasting.

The like to this is delivered in *2 Pet. iii. 9. The Lord is not slack, as some men count slackness, but patient towards us; that is, us men. And why patient towards us? Because he would have none to perish.* The end, therefore, of GOD's patience is man's salvation and repentance.

In the last place, those other gifts of GOD, by which men's understandings are enlightened and their souls beautified

tified (namely, knowledge, fortitude, liberality, temperance, humility, chastity, and such like) are bestowed upon all that have them, among whom are many that prove reprobates in the end, that by the exercise of them, and continuance in them, they might come to eternal life.

That reprobates are adorned with many of these graces, appears by sundry scriptures, especially *Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.* where the apostle saith, that it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of GOD, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. The graces which the apostle here speaketh of, are not ordinary, but special and excellent graces; illumination, faith, a relish of GOD's word, and a taste of heaven; and the persons spoken of, are apostates, such as are under a possibility of falling away for ever (for upon a danger not possible cannot be built a solid exhortation) and consequently reprobates: and the thing intimated is, that upon apostates and reprobates are these excellent gifts many times bestowed. The like speech we have, *Heb. x. 26.* *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.* From whence we may collect, that men who sin willingly and unpardonably, may have received the knowledge of the truth; yea, and be sanctified by the blood of the testament and by the Spirit of grace, ver. 29.

The unclean spirit may go out of a man, Matt. xii. 43. They may receive the word with joy, Matt. xiii. 20. And many more excellent graces they may have besides. Now all these virtues and graces are not given them that they might abuse them, and so purchase to themselves the greater damnation; or that they might do good to others with them, but none to themselves: but rather, that, as by the former gifts of nature, so by these of grace they may obtain salvation. For if GOD aim at this in those gifts that are farther off, much more in these, which make those that have them, not far from the kingdom of heaven. My
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proof for this, I borrow of our divines at the synod, who in their suffrage have these two positions :

1. " There are certain internal works preparing a man for justification, which, by the power of the word and Spirit, are wrought in the hearts of men not yet justified; such as are the knowledge of GOD's will, a sense of sin, and fear of punishment." This is their first.

2. Their second position is this: " Those whom GOD by his word and Spirit affecteth after this manner, those he truly and seriously calleth and inviteth to conversion."

Out of these two theses thus much ariseth, that GOD worketh the knowledge of his will, the sense of sin, fear of hell, hope of pardon, and consequently, many other excellent graces, in the hearts of men, that by these they may be converted, and so eternally saved.

We see, by these things, what end GOD aimeth at in his gifts to men.

But there are some scriptures that seem to say the contrary, namely, *Rom. i. 20.* where GOD is said to reveal himself to the Gentiles by the creatures, *that they might be without excuse.* And *Luke ii. 34.* Simeon saith of Christ, *that he is appointed for the falling and rising again of many in Israel.* And *1 Cor. i. 23.* *We preach Christ, saith St. Paul, to the Jews a stumbling-block.* *2 Cor. ii. 16.* *We are the savour of death unto death.* By these places it seemeth that GOD giveth these things to some, to make them stumble, and that they might be left without excuse. What shall we say, therefore, to these places?

Of all of them in general I may say, that they are to be understood of the end, which is many times effected by these gifts of GOD, and not of the end which is primarily intended in them; and they shew what Christ, the word preached, and the gifts of nature and grace, are *occasionally* to some men, through their voluntary rebellion against GOD, and not what they are *intentionally* in GOD's first thoughts and resolutions: he intendeth them for their good, though many times they receive them to their hurt. It is with GOD's gifts, and that very often too, as it is sometimes
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with physic: it is given by the physician for the patient's good; but many times, through the distemper of his body, it doth him hurt. And as it is with the sun, GOD intendeth by the shining of it, the enlightening and cheering of men and other creatures, yet some men are hurt by the light of it, others are scorched by the heat of it; accidentally, by reason of the climates wherein they live, or the ill-affect-
edness of their eyes and bodies: So the blessings of GOD, which out of his abundant goodness are bestowed on men for their eternal good, through their ill temper of heart, effect their hurt, partly because of their wickedness, and partly because of the justice of GOD; who, as he hath an antecedent and gracious will to do men good; so he hath a consequent and judiciary will, of giving up obstinate men to their own hearts' lusts, and of permitting them to dash against Christ, and other means of life, and so to fall into endless misery; which made *Prosper* say, "They that have despised GOD's inviting will, shall feel his revenging will."

Now if this be the meaning of these scriptures, then do they not thwart that which hath been said of GOD's gracious intent of promoting the eternal good of men by his blessings bestowed upon them: for no sinful event is properly under GOD's decree, but under his prescience only, or at most under a permissive decree: and many things happen in the world which are beside the antecedent and principal purpose of GOD; not because there is any want of power in GOD, but because his will is often conditional, and therefore not effected, because the condition is not performed.

But by the opinion of absolute reprobation, the gifts both of nature and grace have another end: either GOD doth not mean them to those that perish, although they enjoy them, because they are mingled in the world with the elect, to whom only they are directed; or if he do, he meaneth they shall have them, and be lifted up by them above the common rank of men, that their fall may be the greater. And so much is said by the chief defenders of it. "GOD sendeth his word to reprobates," saith *Calvin*, "that they might be made more deaf; he setteth up a light before
" them,

"them, to make them the blinder; he giveth them a remedy, that they might not be healed." And, saith *Beza*, "It should not seem absurd unto us, that GOD should offer his grace in the word and sacraments, not that they might be saved by it, but that they might be obnoxious to the former punishment." So *Maccovius*, "Christ knocketh at the hearts of reprobates, who he knoweth neither can or will open unto him; not that he may enter in, but partly that he may upbraid them for their impotency, and partly that he may increase their damnation."

More particularly by this doctrine,

I. Christ came not into the world to procure the salvation of them that perish, because they were inevitably ordained to perish.

II. The word of grace is not sent to them: or if it be, it is sent that they might slight it or condemn it, and so increase their damnation by condemning it; which being so, these inconveniencies will arise:

1. That GOD is a mere deluder of miserable men, whom he calleth to salvation in the name of his Son by the preaching of the word: for what else can he be, that pretendeth their good, whom he fully intendeth to ruin?

2. That ministers are but false witnesses, because in their ministry they offer salvation conditionally to many, whose damnation is determined absolutely.

3. The ministry of the word cannot leave men without excuse: for reprobates may have this just plea; "Lord, dost thou punish us for not believing in thy Son, when thou didst call us to believe by the preaching of thy word? Why? Thou didst decree to leave us in *Adam's* sin; to give us neither power to believe, nor a Christ to believe in. How canst thou justly charge us with sin, or increase our punishment for not believing in him, whom thou didst resolve, before the world was, that we should never believe in?"

III. The sacraments also, by this opinion, signify nothing, seal nothing, confer nothing to such as are not saved; but

but are mere blanks to them, not through the fault of the men, but by the primary and absolute will of GOD.

Lastly, GOD's other gifts which he bestoweth upon men, of what nature soever they be, are, to the most that receive them, in GOD's absolute intention,

1. *Unprofitable*, such as shall never do them good in reference to their eternal condition.

2. *Hurtful*; given them not out of love, but extreme hatred; not that they might use them well, and be blessed in so doing, but that they might use them ill, and by ill using of them procure to themselves the greater damnation. GOD lifteth them up, as the devil did Christ, to the pinnacle of the temple, that so they might fall; and loadeth them with knowledge and other goodly endowments, that with the weight of them he might sink them down to hell.

And so, by good consequence, GOD's choicest gifts are intended and used as snares to entrap men's souls. Men that have them, have little cause to be thankful for them or to love the giver of them, but to hate him rather; because they are but giftless gifts, of the same nature with a griping usurer's bounty, *Jael's* courtesy, *Saul's* marrying of *Michal* to *David*, or a bait for a poor fish, which she swallowed with a hook to boot.

My fourth general reason against absolute reprobation is, it is a hindrance to piety: it is a doctrine that serveth greatly to discourage holiness, and encourage profaneness. It maketh ministers, by its natural import, negligent in their preaching, praying, and other services, which are ordained of GOD for the eternal good of his people. It maketh people careless in hearing, reading, praying, instructing their families, examining their consciences, fasting and mourning for their sins, and all other godly exercises. In a word, it cutteth asunder the very sinews of religion, and pulleth away the strongest inducements to a holy life. Therefore, it is no true and wholesome doctrine. *read on*

That

That it doth so, will appear by these reasons that follow.

1. It taketh away hope and fear; hope of attaining any good by godliness; fear of sustaining any hurt by wickedness: and so it taketh away two principal props of religion.

The reason may be resolved into these two branches:

1. Hope and fear uphold godliness. Were it not for these, it would come to ruin: by these are men strongly led on to virtue, and with-held from vice. Hope doth stir men up to begin, and strengthen them in the doing of any good action begun. By this hope of heaven did our Saviour stir up himself (as he was man) to *endure the cross, and despise the shame*, Heb. xii. 2. By this he heartened his disciples to do and to suffer for his sake, Matt. v. 11, 12, and x. 32. By this have all the godly, in all ages, encouraged themselves in well-doing, as we may see in general, Phil. iii. 20, 21. Col. i. 5. Tit. ii. 12, 13. And in particular, *Abraham* left his country and kindred at GOD's call, *because he looked for a city, whose builder and maker was GOD*, Heb. xi. 8, 9, 10. *Moses* left all the pleasures and treasures of Egypt, and endured afflictions with the people of GOD, *because he saw him that was invisible, and had respect to the recompence of reward*, ver. 25, 26, 27. The martyrs endured racks, gibbets, lions, sword, fire, with a world of other torments, *because they looked for a better resurrection*, ver. 35. *Paul* endeavoured always to keep a clear conscience, through the hope which he had of a blessed resurrection, Acts xxiv. 15, 16. All the noble and heroic acts of active and passive obedience, have sprung from the hope of eternal glory. Soldiers, merchants, husbandmen, all are whetted on by hope, to diligence in their callings, as daily experience sheweth us. The hope of heaven, therefore, is a great encouragement to piety.

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The following discourse was written by our honoured friend John Wesley, above five and fifty years ago, for the use of his pupils at Oxford. It does not indeed strictly come within the letter of our engagements in the preface to the first volume of our magazine. But as it has never been published in America, and but lately in Europe, we will venture on one exception to our general rule.

S E R M O N X V .

On LUKE xxii: 19.

Do this in remembrance of me.

IT is no wonder that men who have no fear of GOD, should never think of doing this. But it is strange that it should be neglected by any that do fear GOD, and desire to save their souls: and yet nothing is more common. One reason why many neglect it is, they are so much afraid of *eating and drinking unworthily*, that they never think how much greater the danger is, when they do not eat or drink it at all. That I may do what I can to bring these well-meaning men to a more just way of thinking, I shall,

First, shew that it is the duty of every christian to receive the Lord's supper as often as he can; and secondly, answer some objections.

I. I am to shew, that it is the duty of every christian to receive the Lord's supper as often as he can.

1. The first reason why it is the duty of every christian so to do, is because it is a plain command of Christ. That this is his command, appears from the words of the text, *Do this in remembrance of me*: by which, as the apostles were obliged to bless, break and give the bread to all that joined with them in those holy things, so were all christians obliged to receive those signs of Christ's body and blood. Here therefore the bread and wine are commanded to be received, in remembrance of his death, to the end of the world.

Observe too, that this command was given by our Lord, when he was just laying down his life for our sakes. They are therefore, as it were, his dying words, to all his followers.

2. A second reason why every christian should do this, as often as he can, is because the benefits of doing it are so great, to all that do it in faith, and in obedience to him : namely, the forgiveness of our past sins, the present strengthening and refreshing of our souls. In this world we are never free from temptations. Whatever way of life we are in, whatever our condition be, whether we are sick or well, in trouble or at ease, the enemies of our souls are watching to lead us into sin. And too often they prevail over us. Now when we are convinced of having sinned against GOD, what surer way have we of procuring pardon from him, than the *shewing forth the Lord's death* ? and beseeching him, for the sake of his Son's sufferings, to blot out all our sins ?

3. The grace of GOD given herein, confirms to us the pardon of our sins, by enabling us to leave them. As our bodies are strengthened by bread and wine, so are our souls by these tokens of the body and blood of Christ. This is the food of our souls : this gives strength to perform our duty, and leads us on to perfection. If therefore we have any regard for the plain command of Christ, if we desire the pardon of our sins, if we wish for strength to believe, to love and obey GOD, then we should neglect no opportunity of receiving the Lord's supper. Then we must never turn our backs on the feast which our Lord has prepared for us. We must neglect no occasion which the good providence of GOD affords us for this purpose. This is the true rule ; so often are we to receive, as GOD gives us opportunity. Whoever therefore does not receive, but goes from the holy table, when all things are prepared, either does not understand his duty, or does not care for the dying command of his Saviour, the forgiveness of his sins, the strengthening of his soul, and the refreshing it with the hope of glory.

4. Let

4. Let every one, therefore, who has either any desire to please GOD, or any love of his own soul, obey GOD, and consult the good of his own soul, by communicating every time he can : like the first christians, with whom the christian sacrifice was a constant part of the Lord's-day's service, and for several centuries they received it almost every day : four times a week always. Accordingly those that joined in the prayers of the faithful, never failed to partake of the blessed sacrament. What opinion they had of any who turned his back upon it, we may learn from that ancient canon, " If any believer join in the prayers of the faithful, and go away without receiving the Lord's supper, let him be excommunicated, as bringing confusion into the church of GOD."

5. In order to understand the nature of the Lord's supper, it would be useful carefully to read over those passages in the gospel, and in the first epistle to the Corinthians, which speak of the institution of it. Hence we learn that the design of this sacrament is the continual remembrance of the death of Christ, by eating bread and drinking wine, which are the outward signs of the inward grace, the body and blood of Christ.

6. It is highly expedient for those who purpose to receive this, whenever their time will permit, to prepare themselves for this solemn ordinance, by self-examination and prayer. But this is not absolutely necessary. And when we have not time for it, we should see that we have the habitual preparation which is absolutely necessary, and can never be dispensed with on any account, or any occasion whatever. This is, first, a full *purpose* of heart, to keep all the commands of GOD. And secondly, a sincere *desire*, to receive all his promises.

II. I am, in the second place, to answer the common objections against constantly receiving the Lord's supper.

1. I say, *constantly* receiving. For as to the phrase of *frequent* communion, it is absurd to the last degree. If it means any thing less than constant, it means more than can be proved to be the duty of any man. For if we are not obliged to communicate *constantly*, by what argument
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can it be proved, that we are obliged to communicate *frequently*? Yea, more than once a year, or once in seven years? or once before we die? Every argument brought for this, either proves that we ought to do it *constantly*, or proves nothing at all. Therefore that indeterminate, unmeaning way of speaking, ought to be laid aside by all men of understanding.

2. In order to prove that it is our duty to communicate constantly, we may observe that the holy communion is to be considered either, 1. As a command of GOD, or 2. As a mercy to man.

First, As a command of GOD. GOD, our Mediator and Governor, from whom we have received our life and all things, on whose will it depends, whether we shall be perfectly happy or perfectly miserable from this moment to eternity, declares to us, that all who obey his commands, shall be eternally happy; all who do not, shall be eternally miserable. Now one of these commands is, "*Do this in remembrance of me.*" I ask then, Why do you not do this, when you can do it if you will? When you have an opportunity before you, why do not you obey the command of GOD?

3. Perhaps you will say, "GOD does not command me to do this *as often as I can*:" that is, the words "*as often as you can*," are not added in this particular place. What then? Are we not to obey every command of GOD, as often as we can? Are not all the promises of GOD made to those, and those only, who *give all diligence*; that is, to those, who do all they can, to obey his commandments? Our power is the one rule of our duty. Whatever we can do, that we ought.

4. And this great truth, that we are obliged to keep every command as far as we can, is clearly proved from the absurdity of the contrary opinion: for were we to allow that we are not obliged to obey every commandment of GOD as often as we can, we have no argument left to prove that any man is bound to obey any command at any time. For instance, Should I ask a man, why he did

did not obey one of the plainest commands of GOD? Why, for instance, he does not help his parents? He might answer, "I will not do it now; but I will at another time." When that time comes, put him in mind of GOD's command again: and he will say, "I will obey it some time or other." Nor is it possible even to prove, that he ought to do it now, unless by proving that he ought to do it as often as he can: and therefore he ought to do it now, because he can if he will.

5. Consider the Lord's supper, secondly, as a mercy from GOD to man. As GOD, whose mercy is over all his works, and particularly over the children of men, knew there was but one way for man to be happy like himself, namely, by being like him in holiness: as he knew we could do nothing toward this of ourselves, he has given us certain means of obtaining his help. One of these is the Lord's supper, which of his infinite mercy he hath given for this very end, that through this means we may be assisted to attain those blessings which he hath prepared for us; that we may obtain holiness on earth and everlasting glory in heaven.

I ask then, why do you not accept of his mercy as often as ever you can? GOD now offers you his blessing: why do you refuse it? you have now an opportunity of receiving his mercy: why do you not receive it? You are weak: why do not you seize upon every opportunity of increasing your strength? In a word, considering this as a mercy, he that does not communicate as often as he can, has little wisdom.

6. These two considerations will yield a full answer to all the common objections, which have been made against constant communion: indeed to all that ever were or can be made. In truth nothing can be objected against it, but upon supposition, that this particular time, either the communion would be no mercy, or I am not commanded to receive it. Nay, should we grant it would be no mercy, that is not enough: for still the other reason would hold: whether it does you any good or none, you are to obey the command of GOD.

7. How.

7. However, let us see the particular excuses which men commonly make for not obeying it. The most common is, "I am *unworthy*; and *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*. Therefore I dare not communicate, lest I should eat and drink my own damnation."

The case is this. GOD offers you a great mercy, and commands you to accept it. Why do not you accept this mercy, in obedience to his command? You say, "I am unworthy to receive it." And what then? You are unworthy to receive any mercy from GOD. But is that a reason for refusing all mercy? GOD offers you a pardon for all your sins. You are unworthy of it, 'tis sure, and he knows it: but since he is pleased to offer it nevertheless, will not you accept of it? He offers to deliver your soul from death. You are unworthy to live. But will you therefore refuse life? He offers to endue your soul with new strength: because you are unworthy of it, will you deny to take it? What can GOD himself do for us farther, if we refuse his mercy, even because we are unworthy of it?

8. But suppose this were no mercy to us (to suppose which is indeed giving GOD the lie; saying, That is not good for man, which he purposely ordered for his good:) still I ask, Why do not you obey GOD's command? He says, "Do this." Why do you not? You answer, "I am unworthy to do it." What! Unworthy to obey GOD? Unworthy to do what GOD bids you do? Unworthy to obey GOD's command? What do you mean by this? That those who are unworthy to obey GOD, ought not to obey him? Who told you so? If he were even *an angel from heaven, let him be accursed*. If you think God himself has told you so by St. Paul, let us hear his words. They are these, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*.

Why, this is quite another thing. Here is not a word said of *being unworthy* to eat and drink. Indeed he does speak of eating and drinking *unworthily*: but that is quite a different thing: so he has told us himself. In this very

chapter

chapter we are told, that by eating and drinking unworthily is meant, taking the holy sacrament in such a rude and disorderly way, that one was *hungry, and another drunken*. But what is that to *you*? Is there any danger of *your* doing so? Of your eating and drinking *thus unworthily*? However unworthy you are to communicate, there is no fear of your communicating thus. Therefore whatever the punishment is of doing it thus unworthily, it does not concern *you*. You have no more reason from this text to disobey GOD, than if there was no such text in the bible. If you speak of "eating and drinking unworthily" in the sense St. Paul uses the words, you may as well say, "I dare not communicate *for fear the church should fall, as for fear I should eat and drink unworthily.*"

9. If then you fear bringing *damnation* on yourself by this, you fear where no fear is. Fear it not, for eating and drinking unworthily; for that in St. Paul's sense, ye cannot do. But I will tell you for what you shall fear damnation: for not eating and drinking at all: for not obeying your Maker and Redeemer: for disobeying his plain command: for thus setting at nought both his mercy and authority.

10. We see then how weak the objection is, "I dare not receive, because I am unworthy." Nor is it any stronger, though the reason why you think yourself unworthy is, that you have lately fallen into sin. It is true, those "who have done any grievous crime," ought not to receive without repentance. But all that follows from this is, That we should repent before we come; not that we should neglect to come at all.

To say, therefore, that "a man may turn his back upon the Lord's table, because he has lately fallen into sin; that he may impose this penance upon himself," is talking without any warrant from scripture. For where does the bible teach, to atone for breaking one commandment of GOD, by breaking another? What advice is this, "Commit a new act of disobedience, and GOD will more easily forgive the past!"

11. Others

11. Others there are, who to excuse their disobedience, plead, that they are unworthy in another sense: that they "cannot live up to it; they cannot pretend to lead so holy a life, as constantly communicating would oblige them to do." Put this into plain words. I ask, Why do not you accept the mercy which GOD commands you to accept? You answer, "Because I cannot live up to the profession I must make when I receive it." Then it is plain you ought never to receive it at all. For it is no more lawful to promise once what you know you cannot perform, than to promise it a thousand times. You know too, that it is one and the same promise, whether you make it every year or every day. You promise to do just as much, whether you promise ever so often or ever so seldom.

If therefore you cannot live up to the profession they make, who communicate once a week, neither can you come up to the profession you make, who communicate once a year. But cannot you indeed? Then it had been good for you that you had never been born. For all that you profess at the Lord's table, you must both profess and keep, or you cannot be saved. For you engage nothing there but this, That you will diligently keep his commandments. And cannot you keep up to this profession? Then you cannot enter into life.

12. Think then what you say, before you say, "You cannot live up to what is required of constant communicants." This is no more than is required of any communicants, yea, of every one that has a soul to be saved. So that to say, "You cannot live up to this," is neither better nor worse than renouncing christianity. It is in effect renouncing your baptism, wherein you solemnly entered into covenant, to keep all his commandments. You now fly from that engagement. You wilfully break one of his commandments, and to excuse yourself say, You cannot keep his commandments! then you cannot expect to receive the promises, which are made only to those that keep them.

13. What has been said on this pretence against constant communion, is applicable to those who say the same thing
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In other words, "We dare not do it, because it requires so perfect an obedience afterwards, as we cannot promise to perform." Nay, it requires neither more nor less perfect obedience, than you engaged in your baptism. You then entered into covenant to keep the commandments of GOD, by his help; and you promise no more when you communicate.

But observe upon the whole, this is not so properly an objection against constantly communicating, as against communicating at all. For if we are not to receive the Lord's supper till we are worthy of it; it is certain, we ought never to receive it.

14. A second objection which is often made against constant communion, is the having so much business as will not allow time for such a preparation as is necessary thereto. I answer, all the preparation that is absolutely necessary, is contained in these words, "Repent you truly of your sins past: have faith in Christ our Saviour." (And observe, that word is not here taken in its highest sense!) "Amend your lives, and be in charity with all men: So shall ye be meet partakers of these holy mysteries." All who are thus prepared, may draw near without fear, and receive the sacrament to their comfort. Now what business can hinder you from being thus prepared? From repenting of your past sins? From believing that Christ died to save sinners? From amending your lives, and being in charity with all men? No business can hinder you from this, unless it be such as hinders you from being in a state of salvation. If you resolve and design to follow Christ, you are fit to approach the Lord's table. If you do not design this, you are only fit for the table and company of devils.

15. No business therefore can hinder any man from having that preparation which alone is necessary, unless it be such as unprepares him for heaven, as puts him out of a state of salvation. Indeed every prudent man will, when he has time, examine himself before he receives the Lord's supper: whether he repents him truly of his former sins, whether he believes the promises of GOD, whether he fully designs

to walk in his ways, and be in charity with all men? In this, and in private prayer, he will doubtless spend all the time he conveniently can. But what is this to you who have not time? What excuse is this, for not obeying GOD? He commands you to come; and prepare yourself by prayer, as you have time; if you have not the time you wish to have, however come. Make not reverence to GOD's command a pretence for breaking it. Do not rebel against him, for fear of offending him. Whatever you do, or leave undone besides, be sure to do what GOD bids you do. Examining yourself, and using extraordinary private prayer before the Lord's supper, is good. But behold! *to obey is better than self-examination, and to hearken*, than the prayer of an angel.

16. A third objection against constant communion is, That it abates our reverence for the sacrament. Suppose it did. What then! Will you thence conclude, that you are not to receive it constantly? This does not follow. GOD commands you, "Do this." You may do it now, but will not: and to excuse yourself, say, "If I do it so often, it will abate the reverence with which I do it now." Suppose it did: has GOD ever told you; That when the obeying his command abates your reverence to it, then you may disobey it? If he has, you are guiltless; if not, what you say is just nothing to the purpose. The law is clear. Either shew that the lawgiver makes this exception, or you are guilty before him.

17. Reverence for the sacrament may be of two sorts: either such as is owing purely to the newness of the thing, such as men naturally have for any thing they are not used to: or such as is owing to our faith, or to the love or fear of GOD. Now the former of these is not properly a religious reverence, but purely natural. And this sort of reverence for the Lord's supper, the constantly receiving of it must lessen. But it will not lessen the true religious reverence, but rather confirm and increase it.

18. A fourth objection is, "I have communicated constantly so long, but I have not found the benefit I expected." This

This has been the case with many well-meaning persons, and therefore deserves to be particularly considered. And consider this, first. Whatever GOD commands us to do, we are to do, because he commands, whether we feel any benefit thereby or no. Now GOD commands, *Do this in remembrance of me.* This therefore we are to do, because he commands: whether we find present benefit thereby or not. But undoubtedly we shall find benefit sooner or later, though perhaps insensibly. We shall be insensibly strengthened, made more fit for the service of GOD, and more constant in it. At least we are kept from falling back, and preserved from many sins and temptations: and surely this should be enough to make us receive this food as often as we can; though we do not presently feel the happy effects of it, as some have done, and we ourselves may, when GOD sees best.

19. It has been shewn, first, That if we consider the Lord's supper as a command of Christ, no man can have a due respect for that command, who does not receive it as often as he can: Secondly, That if we consider the institution of it, as a mercy to ourselves, no man who does not receive it as often as he can, has any pretence to christian-prudence: Thirdly, That none of the objections usually made, can be any excuse for that man, who does not at every opportunity obey this command, and accept this mercy.

20. It has been particularly shewn, first, that unworthiness is no excuse: because though in one sense we are all unworthy, yet none of us need be afraid of being unworthy in St. Paul's sense; of *eating and drinking unworthily*: Secondly, That the not having time enough for preparation, can be no excuse: since the only preparation which is absolutely necessary, is that which no business can hinder; nor indeed any thing on earth, unless so far as it hinders our being in a state of salvation: Thirdly, That its abating our reverence is no excuse: since he who gave the command, "Do this," no where adds, "unless it abates your reverence:" Lastly, That our not profiting by it is no excuse,

cuse, since it is our own fault, in neglecting that necessary preparation, which is in our own power. If those who have hitherto neglected it on any of these pretences, will lay these things to heart, they will, by the grace of GOD, come to a better mind, and never more forsake their own mercies.

OXON, Feb. 19, 1732.

AN EXTRACT

Of the Rev^d. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL.

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1639.

[Continued from page 74.]

FINDING the same doubts return on *Tuesday*, I consulted the oracles of GOD again, and found much comfort from those words, *They which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

Friday Nov. 3. I preached at St. Antholin's. *Sunday, 5.* in the morning at St. Botolph's Bishopgate, in the afternoon at *Issington*, and in the evening to such a congregation as I never saw before, at St. Clement's in the Strand. As this was the first time of my preaching here, I suppose it is to be the last.

On *Wednesday* my brother and I went, at their earnest desire, to do the last good office to the condemned malefactors. It was the most glorious instance I ever saw, of faith triumphing over sin and death. One observing the tears run fast down the cheeks of one of them in particular, while his eyes were steadily fixed upwards, a few moments before he died, asked, "How do you feel your heart now?" He calmly replied, "I feel a peace, which I could not have believed to be possible. And I know it is the peace of GOD which passeth all understanding."

My brother took that occasion of declaring the gospel of peace to a large assembly of publicans and sinners. O

Lord

Lord GOD of my fathers accept even me among them, and cast me not out from among thy children!

In the evening, I proclaimed mercy to my fellow-sinners at *Basing-shaw* church: and the next morning at St. *Antholin's*. Friday 10. I set out, and Saturday 11. spent the evening with a little company at *Oxford*. I was grieved to find *prudence* had made them leave off singing psalms. I fear it will not stop here. GOD deliver me and all that seek him in sincerity, from what the world calls *Christian prudence*!

Sunday 12. I preached twice at the *Castle*. In the following week, I began more narrowly to inquire what the doctrine of the church of *England* is, concerning the much controverted point of justification by faith. And the sum of what I found in the homilies I extracted and printed for the use of others.

Sunday 19. I only preached in the afternoon at the *Castle*. On Monday night I was greatly troubled in dreams, and about eleven o'clock waked in an unaccountable consternation, without being able to sleep again. About that time (as I found in the morning) one who had been designed to be my pupil, but was not come into the porter's lodge (where several persons were sitting) with a pistol in his hand. He presented this as in sport, first at one, and then at another. He then attempted twice or thrice to shoot himself, but it would not go off. Upon his laying it down, one took it up and blew out the priming. He was very angry, went and got fresh prime, came in again, sat down, beat the flint with his key; and about 12, pulling off his hat and wig, said, "He would die like a gentleman," and shot himself through the head.

Thursday 23. Returning from preaching at the *Castle*, I met once more with my old companion in affliction, C. D. who stayed with me till Monday. His last conversation with me, was as follows:

"In this you are better than you was at *Savannah*. You know that you was then quite wrong. But you are not right yet. You know that you was then blind, but you do not see now,

"I doubt

"I doubt not but GOD *will* bring you to the right foundation. But I have no hope for you, while you are on your present foundation. It is as different from the true, as the right hand from the left. You have all to begin anew.

"I have observed all your words and actions, and I see you are of the same spirit still. You have a simplicity. But it is a simplicity of your own. It is not the simplicity of Christ. You think you do not trust in your own works. But you do trust in your own works. You do not believe in Christ.

"You have a present freedom from sin. But it is only a temporary suspension of it, not a deliverance from it. And you have a peace. But it is not a true peace. If death were to approach, you would find all your fears return.

"But I am forbid to say any more. My heart sinks in me like a stone."

I was troubled. I begged of GOD an answer of peace, and opened on those words, *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy and upon the Israel of GOD.* I was asking in the evening, that GOD would fulfil all his promises in my soul, when I opened my testament on those words, *My hour is not yet come.*

Sunday Dec. 3. I began reading prayers at *Bocardo* (the city-prison) which had been long discontinued. In the afternoon I received a letter, earnestly desiring me, to publish my account of *Georgia*; and another as earnestly dissuading me from it, "because it would bring much trouble upon me." I consulted GOD in his word, and received two answers; the first *Ezek. xxxiii. 2. 6.* The other, *Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

Tuesday Dec. 5. I began reading prayers and preaching in *Gloucester-Green* workhouse, and on *Thursday* in that belonging to *St. Thomas's* parish. On both days I preached at the *Castle*. At *St. Thomas's* was a young woman, raving mad, screaming and tormenting herself continually. I had a strong desire to speak to her. The moment I began she was still. The tears ran down her cheeks all the time I was telling

ling her, "Jesus of *Nazarath* is able and willing to deliver you." O where is faith upon earth? Why are these poor wretches left under the open bondage of Satan? Jesus, Master! give thou medicine to heal their sickness: and deliver those who are now also vexed with unclean spirits!

About this time, being desirous to know how the work of GOD went on among our brethren at *London*, I wrote to many of them concerning the state of their souls. One or two of their answers I have subjoined.

My Dear Friend, whom I love in the Truth,

I Know my Saviour's voice, and my heart burns with love and desire to follow him in the regeneration. I have no confidence in the flesh. I loath myself and love him only. My dear brother, my spirit even at this moment rejoices in GOD my Saviour, and the love which is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost destroys all self-love, so that I could lay down my life for my brethren. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and have confidence towards GOD, that through his blood my sins are forgiven. He hath begotten me of his own will, and saves me from sin, so that it has no dominion over me. His Spirit bears witness with my spirit, that I am his child by adoption and grace. And this is not for works of righteousness which I have done. For I am his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works: so that all boasting is excluded. It is now about 18 years since Jesus took possession of my heart. He then opened my eyes and said unto me, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. My dear friend, bear with my relating, after what manner I was born of GOD. It was an *instantaneous* act. My whole heart was filled with a divine power, drawing all the faculties of my soul after Christ, which continued three or four nights and days. It was as a mighty rushing wind, coming into the soul, enabling me from that moment to be more than conqueror, over those corruptions which before I was always a slave to. Since that time, the whole bent of my will hath been towards him day
and

and night, even in my dreams. I know that I dwell in Christ, and Christ in me; I am bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. That you, and all that wait for his appearing, may find the consolation of *Israel*, is the earnest prayer of
Your affectionate brother in Christ,

W. F.

My most Dear and Honoured Father in Christ.

IN the 20th year of my age, 1737, GOD was pleased to open my eyes, and to let me see that I did not live as became a child of GOD. I found my sins were great, (though I was what they call a sober person) and that GOD kept an account of them all. However I thought, if I repented, and led a good life, GOD would accept me. And so I went on for about half a year, and had sometimes great joy. But last winter, I began to find, that whatever I did was nothing. My very tears I found were sin, and the enemy of souls laid so many things to my charge, that sometimes I despaired of heaven. I continued in great doubts and fears, until *April 9*, when I went out of town. Here for a time I was greatly transported, in meditating and seeing the glorious works of GOD; but in about three weeks I was violently assaulted again. GOD then offered a Saviour to me, but my self-righteousness kept me from laying hold on him.

On *Whitsunday*, I went to receive the blessed sacrament, but with a heart as hard as a stone. Heavy laden I was indeed, when GOD was pleased to let me see a crucified Saviour. I saw there was a fountain opened in his side for me to wash in and be clean. But alas! I was afraid to venture, fearing I should be too presumptuous. And I know, and am sure, I at that time refused the atonement which I might then have had. Yet I received great comfort. But in about nine days time, my joy went out, as a lamp does for want of oil, and I fell into my old state, into a state of damnation. Yet I was not without hope; for ever after that time I could not despair of salvation: I had so clear a sight of the fountain opened in the side of our Lord. But still
when

when I thought of death, or the day of judgment, it was a great terror to me. And yet I was afraid to venture to lay all my sins upon Christ.

This was not all. But whenever I retired to prayer, I had a violent pain in my head. This only seized me, when I began to pray earnestly, or to cry out aloud to Christ. But when I cried to him against this also, he gave me ease. Well, I found GOD did love me, and did draw me to Christ. I hungered and thirsted after him, and had an earnest desire to be clothed with his righteousness. But I was still afraid to go boldly to Christ, and to claim him as my Saviour.

July 3. My dear sister came down to see me. She had received the atonement on St. Peter's day. I told her, I thought Christ died for *me*, but as to the assurance she mentioned, I could say nothing.

July 5. She went. That night I went into the garden, and considering what she had told me, I saw him by faith, whose eyes are as a flame of fire; him who justifieth the ungodly. I told him I was ungodly, and it was for *me* that he died. His blood did I plead with great faith, to blot out the hand-writing that was against me. I told my Saviour, that he had promised to give rest to all that were heavy laden. This promise I claimed, and I saw him by faith stand condemned before GOD in my stead. I saw the fountain opened in his side. I found, as I hungered, he fed me; as my soul thirsted, he gave me out of that fountain to drink. And so strong was my faith, that if I had had all the sins of the whole world laid upon me, I knew and was sure one drop of his blood was sufficient to atone for all. Well, I clave unto him, and he did wash me in his blood. He hath clothed me with his righteousness, and has presented me to his father and my father, to his GOD and my GOD, a pure, spotless virgin, as if I had never committed any sin. It is on Jesus I stand, the Saviour of sinners. It is he that hath loved *me*, and given himself for *me*. I cleave unto him, as my surety, and he is bound to pay GOD the debt. While I stand on this rock, I am sure the gates

of hell cannot prevail against me. It is by faith that I am justified, and have peace with GOD through him. His blood has made reconciliation to GOD for me. It is by faith I have received the atonement. It is by faith that I have the Son of GOD; and the Spirit of Christ dwelling in me. And what then shall separate me from the love of GOD which is in Christ Jesus my Lord?

You must think what a transport of joy I was then in, when I that was lost and undone, dropping into hell, felt a Redeemer come, who is *mighty to save, to save unto the uttermost*. Yet I did not receive the witness of the Spirit at that time. But in about half an hour, the devil came with great power to tempt me. However, I minded him not, but went in and lay down pretty much composed in my mind. Now St. Paul says, *After ye believed, ye were sealed with the Spirit of promise*. So it was with me. After I had believed on him that *justifieth the ungodly*, I received that seal of the Spirit, which is the *earnest of our inheritance*. But at that time I did not know any thing of this. My sins were forgiven: but I knew I was not yet born of GOD.

July 6. In the morning, being by myself, I found the work of the Spirit was very powerful upon me (although you know GOD does not deal with every soul in the same way.) As my mother bore me with great pain, so did I feel great pain in my soul in being born of GOD. Indeed I thought the pains of death were upon me, and that my soul was then taking leave of the body. I thought I was going to him whom I saw with strong faith standing ready to receive me. In this violent agony I continued about four hours: and then I began to feel the *Spirit of GOD bearing witness with my spirit, that I was born of GOD*: Because I was a child of GOD, he sent forth the Spirit of his Son into me, crying *Abba, Father*. For that is the cry of every new-born soul. O mighty, powerful, happy change! I who had nothing but devils ready to drag me to hell, now found I had angels to guard me to my reconciled Father, and my Judge; who just before stood ready to condemn me, but was now become my righteousness. But I cannot express what GOD hath done
for

for my soul. No; this is to be my everlasting employment, when I have put off this frail, sinful body, this corrupt, bellish nature of mine; when I join with that great multitude which no man can number, in singing praises to the Lamb that loved us, and gave himself for us! O how powerful are the workings of the Almighty in a new-born soul! The love of GOD was shed abroad in my heart, and a flame kindled there, with pains so violent, yet so very ravishing, that my body was almost torn asunder. I loved. The Spirit cried strong in my heart. I sweated. I trembled. I fainted. I sung. I joined my voice with those that excel in strength. My soul was got up into the Holy Mount. I had no thoughts of coming down again into the body, I who not long before had called to the rocks to fall on me, and the mountains to cover me, could now call for nothing else but *come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*. Then I could cry out with great boldness, There, O GOD, is my surety! There, O death, is thy plague! There, O grave, is thy destruction! There, O Serpent, is the seed that shall for ever bruise thy head. O I thought my head was a fountain of water! I was dissolved in love. *My beloved is mine, and I am his*. He has all charms. He has ravished my heart. He is my comforter, my friend, my all. He is now in his garden, feeding among the lilies. *O I am sick of love!* He is altogether lovely, *the chiefest among ten thousand*. O how Jesus fills, Jesus extends, Jesus overwhelms the soul in which he dwells!

[Continued at page 176.]

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 84.]

7. "FOR about this time the Countess of Huntingdon erected a seminary at Trevecka, in Wales, in order to educate pious young men, of whatever denomination,

tion, for the ministry. She proposed to admit only such as were converted to GOD, and resolved to dedicate themselves to his service. They were at liberty to stay there three years: during which they were to have their education gratis, with every necessary of life, and a suit of clothes once a year: afterwards those who desired it might enter into the ministry, either in the established church of *England*, or among protestants of any other denomination. From the high opinion which the Countess had of Mr. *Fletcher's* piety, learning, and abilities for such an office, she invited him to undertake the direction of that seminary. Not that he could promise to be chiefly resident there; much less constantly. His duty to his own flock at *Madeley*, would by no means admit of this. But he was to attend as often as he conveniently could; to give advice with regard to the appointment of masters, the admission or exclusion of students; to oversee their studies and conduct: to assist their piety, and judge of their qualifications for the work of the ministry.

8. " As Mr. *Fletcher* greatly approved of the design, especially considering, first, That none were to be admitted but such as feared GOD: and secondly, That when they were prepared for it, they might enter into the ministry, wherever Providence opened a door: he readily complied with the invitation, and undertook the charge. This he did without fee or reward, from the sole motive of being useful in the most important work of training up persons for the glorious office of preaching the gospel. And some months after, with the same view, through his means and in consequence of your recommendation to her Ladyship, I was made head master of the school, or as it was commonly called, the college: though I could very ill be spared from *Kingswood*, where I had acted in that capacity about four years.

9. " As yet I was greatly wanted at *Kingswood*. I had likewise a term to keep at *Oxford*: so that I could only pay them a short visit in January, 1770. But in spring I went to reside there. And for some time things went on excellently

excellently well. The young men were serious, and made a considerable progress in learning. And many of them seemed to have a talent for preaching. Mr. *Fletcher* visited them frequently, and was received as an angel of GOD. It is not possible for me to describe the veneration in which we all held him. Like *Elijah* in the schools of the prophets, he was revered; he was loved; he was almost adored; and that not only by every student, but by every member of the family. And indeed he was worthy. Forgive me, my dear sir, if you think I exceed. My heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, shall I say, an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen *Adam*, so fully raised above the ruins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to earth, yet was his whole conversation in heaven: yet was his life, from day to day, hid with Christ in GOD. Prayer, praise, love and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the element in which he himself continually lived. And as to others, his one employment was, to call, entreat and urge them, to ascend with him to the glorious source of being and blessedness. He had leisure comparatively for nothing else. Languages, arts, sciences, grammar, rhetoric, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside, when he appeared in the school-room among the students. His full heart would not suffer him to be silent. He *must* speak, and they were readier to hearken to this servant and minister of Jesus Christ, than to attend to *Sallust*, *Virgil*, *Cicero*, or any Latin or Greek historian, poet or philosopher they were reading. And they seldom hearkened long, before they were all in tears, and every heart caught fire from the flame that burnt in his soul.

10. "These seasons generally terminated in this. Being convinced that to be filled with the Holy Ghost was a better qualification for the ministry of the gospel, than any classical learning, (though that too may be useful in its place.) After speaking a while in the school-room, he used frequent-

ly

ly to say, "As many of you as are athirst for this fulness of the spirit, follow me into my room." On this, many of us have instantly followed him, and there continued till noon, wrestling like *Jacob* for the blessing, praying one after another, till we could bear to kneel no longer. This was not done once or twice, but many times. And I have sometimes seen him on these occasions, once in particular, so filled with the love of GOD, that he could contain no more, but cried out, "O my GOD, withhold thy hand, or the vessel will burst." But he afterwards told me, he was afraid he had grieved the Spirit of GOD: and that he ought rather to have prayed, that the Lord would have enlarged the vessel, or have suffered it to break, that the soul might have no farther bar or interruption to its enjoyment of the supreme good."

[This is certainly a just remark. The proper prayer on such an occasion would have been,

Give me the enlarg'd desire,
And open, Lord, my soul,
Thy own fulness to require,
And comprehend the whole!

Stretch my faith's capacity
Wider, and yet wider still;
Then with all that is in thee
My ravish'd spirit fill!]

11. "Such was the ordinary employment of this man of GOD, while he remained at *Trevecha*. He preached the word of life to the students and family, and as many of the neighbours as desired to be present. He was *instant in season, out of season*; he *reproved, rebuked, exhorted with all long-suffering*. He was always employed, either in discovering some important truth, or exhorting to some neglected duty, or administering some needful comfort, or relating some useful anecdote, or making some profitable remark or observation upon any thing that occurred. And his devout soul, always burning with love and zeal, led him to intermingle

intermingle prayer with all he said. Meanwhile his manner was so solemn, and at the same time so mild and insinuating, that it was hardly possible for any who had the happiness of being in his company, not to be struck with awe and charmed with love, as if in the presence of an angel, or departed spirit. Indeed I frequently thought, while attending to his heavenly discourse and divine spirit, that he was so different from, and superior to the generality of mankind, as to look more like *Moses* or *Elijah*, or some prophet or apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man, dwelling in a house of clay. It is true, his weak and long-afflicted body proclaimed him to be human. But the graces which so eminently filled and adorned his soul, manifested him to be divine. And long before his happy spirit returned to GOD that gave it, that which was human seemed in a great measure to be *swallowed up of life*. O what a loss did *Trevecka* sustain! what an irreparable loss, when he left it!

12. "But why then did he leave it? Why did he give up an office, for which he was so perfectly well qualified? which he executed so entirely to the satisfaction of all the parties with whom he was concerned, and in which it had pleased GOD to give so manifest a blessing to his labours? Perhaps it would be better, in tenderness to some persons, eminent for piety and usefulness, to let that matter remain still under the veil, which forgiving love has cast over it. But if it be thought that justice to his character, and to the cause which from that time he so warmly espoused and so ably defended, requires some light to be cast upon it, it may be the most inoffensive way, to do it in his own words."

[It will be proper to observe here, for the better understanding of the following letter, that some time before Mr. *Fletcher* quitted *Trevecka*, Mr. *Benson* had been discharged from his office there: not for any defect of learning or piety, or any fault found with his behaviour: but wholly and solely, because he did not believe the doctrine of absolute predestination.]

13. "The following is an exact account of all that is material, in a letter he wrote to me, in consequence of my dismissal from the office I had been in.

June 7, 1771.

"Dear Sir,

"The same post brought me yours, and two from my lady, and one from Mr. *Williams*, [the new master.] Those contained no charges but general ones, which with me go for nothing. If the procedure you mention is fact, and your letter is a fair account of the transaction and words relative to your discharge, a false step has been taken. I write this post to her ladyship on the affair, with all possible plainness. If the plan of the college is overthrown, I have nothing more to say to it. I will keep to my text, for one: I trust I shall ever be a servant of all; the confined tool of any one party, I never was, and never will be. If the blow that should have been struck at the *dead spirit*, is struck (contrary to the granted *liberty of sentiment*) at *dead Arminius*, or *absent Mr. Wesley*—If a master is turned away without any fault: it is time for me to stand up with firmness, or to withdraw."

14. "The following paragraphs are transcribed from Mr. *Fletcher's* letter to my lady.

"Mr. *Benson* made a very just defence when he said, He did hold with me the possibility of salvation for all men. If this is what you call Mr. *Wesley's* opinion and Arminianism, and if "every Arminian must quit the college," I am actually discharged. For in my present view of things, I must hold that sentiment, if I believe that the bible is true, and that GOD is love.

"For my part, I am no party-man. In the Lord I am your servant, and that of your every student. But I cannot give up the honour of being connected with my old friends, who notwithstanding their failings, are entitled to my respect, gratitude and affection. Mr. *Wesley* shall always be welcome to my pulpit, and I shall gladly bear my testimony, in his as well as Mr. *Whitefield's*. If you forbid

bid your students to preach for the one, and offer them to preach for the other; and if a master is discarded for believing, that Christ died for all: then prejudice reigns; charity is cruelly wounded; and party-spirit shouts, prevails, triumphs."

15. "Two days after," continues Mr. *Benson*, "he writes, 'I am determined to stand or fall with the liberty of the college. As I entered it a free place, I must quit it the moment it is an harbour for party-spirit.'

"This he was soon constrained to do, as appears from the following letter, wrote about two months after.

"My dear friend,

"On my arrival at the college, I found all very quiet, I fear through the enemy's keeping his goods in peace. While I preached the next day, I found myself as much shackled as ever I was in my life. And after private prayer, I concluded I was not in my place. The same day I resigned my office to my lady, and on Wednesday to the students and the Lord.

"Mr. *Shirley* has sent my lady a copy of part of the minutes of the last conference, [viz. of the year 1770.] They were called *horrible* and *abominable*. My lady told me, "She must *burn* against them: and that whoever did not fully disavow them must quit the college." She accordingly ordered the master and all the students to write their sentiments upon them without reserve. I did so: explained them according to Mr. *Wesley's* sentiments; and approved the doctrine, though not cautiously worded. I concluded by observing, that as after such a step on my part, and such a declaration on my lady's, I could no longer as an honest man stay in the college, I took my leave of it: wishing my lady might find a minister to preside over it less insufficient than

JOHN FLETCHER."

16. "These were his reasons for resigning his charge at *Trevecka*. As the *circular letter* now went abroad, under

the name of Mr. *Shirley*, inviting the clergy of all denominations to assemble in a body at *Bristol*, to oppose you and the preachers met in conference, and oblige you to revoke the *dreadful heresies* contained in those minutes: and as Mr. *Fletcher* thought the churches throughout christendom to be verging very fast toward Antinomianism: he thought the propositions contained in those minutes ought rather to be confirmed than revoked. And as he was now retired to his parish, he had more leisure for such a work than before. So after much prayer and consideration, he determined to write in defence of them. In how able a manner he did this, I need not tell any that have read those incomparable writings. I know not how to give the character of them better, than in the words of Dr. *D-----*, to whom I sent Mr. *Fletcher's* checks, with a recommendatory letter. He answered me,

Dear Sir,

When I first read yours, I must own, I suspected your friendship for Mr. *Fletcher* had made you too lavish in your commendation of his writings: and that when I came to read them, I should find some abatements necessary to be made. But now I have read them, I am far from thinking you have spoken extravagantly; or indeed, that too much can be said in commendation of them. I had not read his first letter, before I was so charmed with the spirit, as well as abilities of the writer, that the gushing tear could not be hindered from giving full testimony of my heart-felt satisfaction. Perhaps some part of this pleasure might arise from finding my own sentiments so fully embraced by the author. But sure I am, the greatest share of it arose from finding those benevolent doctrines so firmly established; and that with such judgement, clearness, and precision, as are seldom, very seldom to be met with. What crowns the whole is, the amiable and christian temper, which those who will not be convinced, must however approve, and wish that their own doctrines "may be constantly attended with the same spirit."

17. How much good has been occasioned by the publication of that *circular letter*! This was the happy occasion of Mr. Fletcher's writing those "checks to Antinomianism:" in which one knows not which to admire most, the *purity* of the language, (such as scarce any foreigner wrote before;) the *strength* and *clearness* of the argument; or the *mildness* and *sweetness* of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole. Infomuch that I nothing wonder at a serious clergyman, who being resolved to live and die in his own opinion, when he was pressed to read them, replied, "No, I will never read Mr. Fletcher's checks: for if I did, I should be of his mind."

18. A short extract from another of his letters, will shew what was his state of mind at this crisis. "How much water, says he, may at last rush out from a little opening? What are our dear L—'s jealousies come to? Ah poor college! Their conduct, among other reasons, has stirred me up to write in defence of the minutes. Methinks I dream, when I reflect, I have wrote controversy—the last subject I thought I should meddle with. I expect to be roughly handled on the account. Lord, prepare me for every thing thou callest me to!

J. F."

CHAP. V.

From his leaving Trevecha, to his going to Bristol.

1. **T**HE frequent journies he took to and from *Trevecha*, while he presided over the college, in all weathers, and at all seasons of the year, farther impaired the firmness of his constitution. And in some of those journies, he had not only difficulties, but dangers likewise to encounter. One day, as he was riding over a wooden bridge, just as he got to the middle thereof it broke in. The mare's fore-legs sunk into the river, but her breast and hinder parts were kept up by the bridge. In that position she lay, as still as if she had been dead, till he got over her neck, and took off his bags, in which were several manuscripts,

scripts, the spoiling of which would have occasioned him much trouble. He then endeavoured to raise her up; but she would not stir, till he went over the other part of the bridge. But no sooner did he set his foot upon the ground, than she began to plunge. Immediately the remaining part of the bridge broke down, and sunk with her into the river. But presently she rose up again, swam out, and came to him.

2. About this time, Mr. *Pilmoor* being desirous to see the inside of a coal-pit, Mr. *Fletcher* went with him to the bottom of a sloping pit, which was supposed to be near a mile under the ground. They returned out of it without any inconvenience. But the next day, while several colliers were there, a damp took fire, which went off with a vast explosion, and killed all the men that were in it.

3. In February 1773, I received from him the following letter:

Reverend and dear Sir,

I hope the Lord, who has so wonderfully stood by you hitherto, will preserve you to see many of your sheep, and me among them, enter into rest. Should Providence call you first, I shall do my best, by the Lord's assistance, to help your brother to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent to throw away the Methodist doctrines and discipline, as soon as he that now letteth is removed out of the way. Every help will then be necessary, and I shall not be backward to throw in my mite. In the mean time you sometimes need an assistant to serve tables, and occasionally to fill up a gap. Providence visibly appointed *me* to that office, many years ago. And though it no less evidently called me hither, yet I have not been without doubt, especially for some years past, whether it would not be expedient, that I should resume my office as your deacon; not with any view of presiding over the Methodists after you; but to ease you a little in your old age, and to be in the way of recovering, and perhaps of doing more good. I have sometimes thought, how
shameful

shameful it was, that no clergyman should join you, to keep in the church the work GOD has enabled you to carry on therein. And as the little estate I have in my own country is sufficient for my maintenance, I have thought I would one day or other, offer you and the Methodists my free service. While my love of retirement made me linger, I was providentially led to do something in Lady *Huntingdon's* plan. But being shut out there, it appears to me, I am again called to my first work. Nevertheless I would not leave this place, without a fuller persuasion that the time is *quite* come. Not that GOD uses me much here, but I have not yet sufficiently cleared my conscience from the blood of all men. Meantime I beg the Lord to guide me by his counsel, and to make me willing to go any where, or no where, to be any thing, or nothing.

Help by your prayers, till you can bless by word of mouth,

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your willing, though unprofitable servant in the gospel,

Madeley, Feb. 6, 1773.

J. F.

[Continued at Page 183.]

*The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishop of the
Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from Page 90.]

WEDNESDAY 13. Preached at 3 o'clock, on, *Behold I stand at the door and knock.* Oh! what a time of satisfaction and power was this to my own soul. Went afterwards to Mr. *Taper's*, and many friends came at 8 o'clock. I was enabled to preach with life.

Thursday 14. Went to the new church. Surely the power of GOD is amongst this people. After preaching with great assistance, I lodged at *Isaac Jenkins's*, and in the morning

morning, he conducted me to *Gloucester*; and thence we went by water to *Philadelphia*. Here I found a change, Brother *Pilmore* was come; and the house was given up; which pleased me well, as it was a burden to the people. Brother *Pilmore* went to Mr. *Wallace's*, and I went to Mr. *Wilmer's*. On Friday night I was heavily afflicted; and dear sister *Wilmer* took great care of me. The next morning, through the mercy of GOD, I was something better; and preached in the evening.

Lord's day 17. After preaching in the morning, went to see *George Hungary*, who was near to eternity. He had peace in his soul.—Some slight me in this place, on account of my attention to discipline; and some drop off. But my work is to please GOD.

Tuesday 19. Went about 16 miles into the country, and preached at 11 o'clock, with energy of soul. A Presbyterian minister, who attended my preaching this morning, accompanied me part of the way back. We conversed, by the way, on the evidences of religion, the work of GOD, and sending out preachers.—This morning I arose with more spiritual strength, and felt a great desire to do the will of GOD with all purity of intention, desire and thought; that in all things GOD may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Wednesday 20. Went to *Trentown*, but as the court was setting, was obliged to preach in a school-house, to but few people; and as there were soldiers in the town, I could hardly procure lodging.

Thursday 21. Preached on the other side of the river to a few simple people; and in the evening at *Burlington*, where the congregation was also small, on account of the fair.

Friday 22. In the morning rode home in great pain; but after dinner went 10 miles down the river.

Sunday 24. We rode down to *Greenwich*, where I preached at 10 o'clock, to near 300 people collected from different parts; we then rode back to friend *Price's* where we dined; and thence to *Gloucester*, which made near 15 miles. I preached there at 3 o'clock, to about 200 people, and then went up the river in a boat, to *Philadelphia*, where I preached at 7 o'clock.

Monday

Monday 25. Was unwell, but went to *Burlington*, and preached in the evening, though very sick.

Tuesday 26. Found myself very unwell in the morning; but visited a prisoner under sentence of death, and strove much to fasten conviction on his heart. Through the mercy of GOD, I hope the poor man was humbled.

Wednesday 27. Went to *New-mills*, where I preached at 4 o'clock; and again at 10 o'clock the next morning. In our lodgings we had much young company who had but little sense of religion.—Mrs. *Hewlings* went with me in a chair. I had many people, Baptists and others, though but little comfort in my own soul.

Friday 29. I preached under the gaol wall; and for the benefit of the prisoner, attended him to the place of execution. When he came forth, he roared like a bull in a net. He looked on every side, and shrieked for help; but all in vain. O how awful! Die he must. Doubtless, unprepared. I prayed with him and for him. How difficult it is (if I may use the term) to drench a hardened sinner with religion! I saw him tied up; and then stepping on a waggon, spoke a word in season, and warned the people to flee from the wrath to come, and improve the day of their gracious visitation, no more grieving the Spirit of GOD, lest a day should come, in which they may cry, and GOD may refuse to hear them. We then rode home to *Philadelphia*, where I exhorted in the evening, and found myself much more drawn out than I expected.

Lord's day 31. Preached morning and evening, with some life; but find that offences increase. However, I cannot help it. My way is, to go straight forward, and aim at what is right.

June 1. Preached this morning at 5 o'clock; and this day wrote to Mr. *Wesley*, and experienced a great degree of purity in my soul.

Tuesday 2. Rose this morning between 4 and 5, and was much quickened in preaching; then went to *Haddonfield*, about noon—Satan had almost gained an advantage over me
this

this day: but the Lord helped and delivered me, for his mercy and truth's sake, and granted me life in my soul.

Wednesday 3. Preaching at 5 at *Manta creek*, was favoured with an opening and great power. After preaching there, about 100 people went to Mr. *Taper's*, 1 and $\frac{1}{4}$ miles off. And there also I preached with life.

Thursday 5. At *Greenwich*, was weak in body, but had some liberty in preaching to about 200 willing people; but at *Gloucester*, preached to only a few dead souls, from this striking passage—*The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* I must observe, that in this journey I have been kept in peace and purity, and had more freedom, life and power, than I ever experienced in the city, or perhaps ever shall.

Saturday 6. Sailing 4 miles up the river, I came to *Philadelphia* in great comfort.

Lord's day, June 7. After preaching in the morning, was at the table with Mr. *Stringer*; and many felt the power of GOD, though I felt but little myself. We had a love-feast to-day, and many could testify that GOD was with us: several of our *Jersey*-friends spake of the power of GOD, with freedom.

Monday 8. With much disagreeable company, I set off for *Trenton*, where many felt the divine power accompanying the word preached.

Wednesday 10. After preaching on the other side of the river, I returned to *Philadelphia*, and preached in the evening.

Thursday 11. Set off in the stage for *Bristol*, and crossed the water to see a man suspected of murder; but found him very ignorant of things relating to his soul; I then returned to *Philadelphia* very unwell.

Friday 12. In the morning I was a little better, and rose to preach at 5 o'clock. The Lord was with me this day at intercession.

Saturday 13. Hitherto the Lord hath helped. Praised be his dear name!

Lord's

Lord's day, *June 14.* After preaching in the morning with some freedom of mind, went to *St. Paul's*, and afterwards spent the afternoon in my room; then preached and met the society in the evening; but felt great dryness, and was grieved to see so much conformity to the world, in the article of dress, among our people.

Tuesday 16. Set off for *Burlington*; and though weak and infirm, preached at night, with liberty.

Wednesday 17. I bent my course for *New-mills*; but still groan for more life, and want to be more holy.

Thursday 18. After preaching twice at *New-mills* with great liberty and life, returned to *Burlington*; but was very ill that night; and though quite unwell the next morning, yet proceeded on my way to *Philadelphia*.

Lord's day, *June 21.* Finding myself much recovered, I preached with some animation.

Monday 22. This day my heart was in deep exercise.

Tuesday 23. Walked down to *Gloucester-point*, and then rode to brother *Chew's*; and though very weak, weary, wet and low, while it rained very hard, I preached with some power to many people from these words—*As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.*

Wednesday 24. At *Greenwich*, met with Mr. *Stringer*, who preached and baptized several people that seemed deeply affected. We then rode together, and had some conversation on the insult which Mr. *Shirly* had given Mr. *Wesley*. As Mr. *Stringer* knew that Mr. *Shirly* had preached for Mr. *Wesley*, and was well acquainted with his doctrine, he was surprized at his conduct.—He said Mr. *Wesley* was undoubtedly a good man, and had been useful to thousands.

Thursday 25. Travelling back towards *Gloucester*, called at 'Squire *Price's*; and presented him with a petition for raising £150. to discharge the debt on our preaching-house at

Philadelphia. He promised both to give, himself, and try others.

Friday 26. Returned to *Philadelphia*, and preached at 8 with some power. But still I am not entirely holy in thought, word and deed. Will not the Lord get the victory? He surely will, and I shall be holy. I find that Satan strives to sow discord among us; and this makes me desirous to leave the city.

Saturday 27. Felt a great desire to live more to the glory of GOD; and preached at night with some life. Received a letter from Mr. *Pilmore* replete with accounts of his preaching abroad, in the church, to large congregations and the like. My heart is still distressed for want of more of GOD. I long to be wholly given up to him; to seek no favour but what cometh from him alone. I want to breathe after GOD in every breath.

Lord's day 28. This was a day of sweet rest to my soul; and the Lord gave me power to speak with some affection.

Monday 29. Set out for *Trentown* with some loose and trifling company in the stage. After preaching in the evening with some life and energy; went the next day to preach in the field, and then returned, and preached with freedom to many people in the court-house.

July 1st. Went over the ferry and preached to many people; among whom were some fine ladies who behaved with airs of great indifferency. Returning to *Trentown*, I preached at night, and the next morning at 5, after which set off for *Philadelphia* with unprofitable company; among whom I sat still as a man dumb; and as one in whose mouth there was no reproof. They appeared so stupidly ignorant, sceptical, deistical and atheistical, that I thought, if there were no other hell, I should strive with all my might to shun that. Came home late and weary; but preached with some comfort. I have lately been blest with much purity of desire and fervour of spirit; but greatly thirst after living more to GOD.

[Continued at page 193.]

LETTERS.

L E T T E R S, &c.

A short account of the death of Mrs. MOORE, of Baltimore, in Maryland; by Mr. George Shadford, in a letter to a friend.

LAST night I preached a funeral sermon on the death of Mrs. Moore, who gave up her soul into the hands of Christ, the Sunday before.

She was awakened about a year ago; and soon after justified freely through the redemption that is in Jesus. After that, she was at times exercised with many doubts and fears; and had various trials common to the people of GOD. All this while her bodily health was decaying, for she was in a deep consumption.

About a fortnight before her death, the Lord saved her from all doubt and fear, and filled her soul with his pure love. From thenceforward she was like a living flame; and so filled with GOD, that every word she spoke was peculiarly weighty, being so clothed with divine power, that she often drew tears from my eyes, and those who were about her.

She often put me in mind of the martyrs, rejoicing, and clapping their hands in the flames; for the GOD of the Hebrews was evidently with her in her fiery trials. What else could enable her to triumph over all the decays of nature, and in the agonies of death! How often did I hear her say, "I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ!" Her happy soul, like a bird in a snare, fluttered to be gone!

A little before she expired, she said to her sister, "I am just now going! Draw near, and I will tell you what praise, what music I hear!"—She then stopped a little. At last she said, "I cannot stay! Farewel! Farewel! Farewel!" and instantly expired, without either sigh or groan. May I also die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like unto her's!

G. S.

Nov. 25, 1774.

Bishop

Bishop HALL's account of a remarkable DREAM.

“**I**N my youth, when I was at *Cambridge*, my brother *Lem-ry* lying with me, early one morning I dreamed that my mother passed by with a sad countenance, and told me, That she would not come to my commencement, (having promised at that time to come to *Cambridge*.) When I related this dream to my brother (both of us waking together in a sweat) he protested he had dreamed the very same. The next carrier brought us word of our mother's death.”

How can this be accounted for on merely rational principles?



L E T T E R.

[From Mr. J. Downes, to the Rev. J. Wesley.]

London, Aug. 4, 1774.

Rev. Sir,

I TAKE the liberty of laying before you some of the reasonings of my mind, which you seem to be the best able to answer.

Last winter the sweet counsel my wife and I took together, was the means of reviving my poor drooping soul. The more life we had, the more was our earnest desire that I should again be devoted to GOD in his church.

As your answer to our letter encouraged that desire, I cast myself upon the Lord's assistance, and preached at the Foundry. GOD in his infinite mercy was pleased to own his poor creature, and give such a blessing to my own soul, and the souls of several others, as I think fully shewed he was well pleased with the return of his poor prodigal. Being encouraged by this, I preached the week following at *Brentford*, and it seems that I am about as much hurt by preaching once, as I should be in walking two or three miles: both the one and the other gives me a slow fever, for which I take the wormwood draughts.

Blessed

Blessed be GOD, I am more and more convinced, it is my duty to make the *most* of the short remainder of life. My cry is only, Lord what wouldst thou have me to do! But where shall we draw the line between faith and enthusiasm? My wife thinks I ought to give up all, that I may be a preacher; and that as GOD has called me to it, I ought to believe he will give me strength. She thinks GOD has so many times shewn her in prayer, that this is his will, that she is quite willing to run all risks; knowing that our heavenly Father is both able and willing to supply all our needs: and she says, the Lord has so often assured her that he will in this way take care of her, that I shall grieve his Spirit if I do not give up all; and she has an odd, and continued impression that he will make us both useful, and deliver us from this present, perhaps *penal* uselessness. Is this faith or enthusiasm? That which inclines me to the former is, that I know how close she walks with GOD; and how many hours in the day she spends in private prayer: and that this is always the result of her nearest access to the throne of grace. That the Lord may bless you with the choicest of his blessings, is, Rev. Sir, the prayer of your unworthy son and servant in the gospel of Christ,

J. DOWNES.

N. B. A little after this he dropt down dead in the pulpit, just when he had concluded his sermon in West-street Chapel, London!

Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing—shall find doing the will of GOD.

A short account of ANN NICHOLS, of Wigan, in Lancashire.

[Written by a Friend.]

ANN NICHOLS was a spotless pattern of Christian perfection. From the time she experienced this blessing,

blessing, she never lost a sense of it for a moment. The case was the same in her justification. She walked under a true sense of her acceptance every moment till she was sanctified. A clearer witness of the doctrines taught by the Methodists I never knew: the same is generally believed by our friends who knew her. Her life was chaste and spotless, constantly displaying the length, and breadth, the depth and height of the love of Jesus. When she was on her death-bed, she clasped her arms round her nurse's neck, and said, with all the strength she had, "The work of my salvation is finished! I can neither doubt nor fear; for Jesus is now with me!" She departed this life, Dec. 15, 1786, and in the 31st year of her age.

A short account of the death of Mr. Thomas Lee: in a letter to the Rev. John Wesley: written by Mrs. Lee.

Rev. Sir,

MY dear husband's last illness began with a pain in his foot, which soon went up into his leg. When he mentioned it, we thought it was the rheumatism, and applied many things to warm it. By these means it seemingly got better. After some time it ascended into his thigh, and became very exquisite. On the morning before he died, the violence of the pain abated a little. But in the afternoon it grew worse again: yet he had no apprehension of his death.

The evening before he died, he expressed great resignation to the will of the Lord: though, as he said, the pains drank up his spirits. He said, "I am the Lord's; and I feel that I am united to him: and I know I shall be with him for ever!"

He preached twice the Sunday before he died; although he went to the preaching-house on crutches, and sat all the time he preached. His first text that day was, "All flesh is as grass, and the glory thereof is as the flower of the grass: the

the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you." His last text was, "Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear the Lord," &c. In this sermon, he said, "perhaps this will be my last sermon:" and truly the power of the Lord was solemnly felt by most present. And as if he saw his end was near, he gave out a funeral hymn. And when he came to those words,

"By faith we already behold
That lovely *Jerusalem* here;
Her walls are of jasper and gold,
As crystal her buildings are clear,"

he seemed to be quite transported at the thought of meeting Jesus.

The night in which he died, I went to bed as usual. But before I slept, the pain flew up to his heart. On this I arose, and called in *George Esrick*. We raised him up, and put something in his mouth, which came out again. He was so sensible as to take my handkerchief to wipe it up.

We laid him down again. He sobbed several times, looked up once and smiled; closed his eyes, and gently fell asleep.

A few months before, he told me he had never such a view of GOD's love towards him, as he had that morning in prayer. The following words were then made a great blessing to him: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine." From that time, I believe he never had a shadow of doubt on his mind, concerning his eternal welfare.

I am, Rev. Sir, yours affectionately,

MARY LEE.

Bolton, Sept. 9, 1786.

A short

A short account of a Yorkshire man, who dug a pit for his wife and fell into it himself : by Mr. J. F. of Leeds.

Leeds, May 5, 1786.

“**A** FEW weeks ago, a man in this neighbourhood, who was weary of his wife, after buying a piece of beef, and rubbing it well over with arsenic, ordered her to roast it for dinner. While it was roasting, the woman was taken so ill, that though he pressed her much, she could not eat a morsel of it : and he making some excuse for not eating of it himself, it was put by for the next day.

But the next day he brought home some fish, and ordered his wife to dress them for his dinner. This being done, he sat down and ate heartily. But before he had done, he was taken very ill. On asking his wife what she had fried the fish with ? she said, “ with the drippings of the beef I roasted yesterday.” On hearing this he cried out, “ Then I am a dead man !” Then throwing down his knife and fork, he confessed what he had done, and died in about two hours !”

(Who that reads this account can help admiring, on the one hand, the providence of GOD, in preserving the life of this injured woman ? and, on the other, his justice, in causing the very evil to fall on the head of this hard-hearted sinner, which he so cruelly intended should fall on his wife ?)

Poetry.

On CHARITY.

FAIREST and foremost of the train that wait
On man's most dignified and happiest state,
Whether we name thee Charity or Love,
Chief grace below, and all in all above;

Come

Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires;
And though disgrac'd and slighted, to redeem
A poet's name, by making thee her theme.

GOD working ever on a social plan,
By various ties attaches man to man:
He made at first, though free and unconfin'd,
One man the common father of the kind;
That every tribe, though plac'd as he sees best,
Where seas or desarts part them from the rest,
Differing in language, manners, or in face,
Might feel themselves allied to all the race.

Again, the band of commerce was design'd
To associate all the branches of mankind;
And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe:
Wise to promote whatever end he means,
GOD opens fruitful nature's various scenes:
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers something to the general use:
No land but listens to the common call,
And in return receives supply from all:
This genial intercourse and mutual aid,
Cheers what were else an universal shade;
Calls nature from her icy-mantled den,
And softens human rock-work into men.

Ingenious art with her expressive face
Steps forth to fashion and refine the race;
Not only fills necessity's demands,
But overcharges her capacious hands:
Capricious taste itself can crave no more,
Than she supplies from her abounding store:
She strikes out all that luxury can ask,
And gains new vigour at her endless task.

Here is the spacious arch, the shapely spire;
 The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre:
 From her the canvas borrows light and shade,
 And verse more lasting, hues that never fade.
 She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,
 Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,
 And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,
 Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

These are the gifts of art, and art thrives most
 Where commerce has enrich'd the busy coast:
 He catches all improvements in his flight,
 Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight;
 Imports what others have invented well,
 And stirs his own to match them, or excel.
 'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,
 Alternately the nations learn and teach;
 While Providence enjoins to every soul
 An union with the vast terraqueous whole.

But ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,
 For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
 Who drive a loathsome traffic, gage and span,
 And buy the muscles and the bones of man?
 The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
 All bonds of nature in that moment end,
 And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
 A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.
 The sable warrior, frantic with regret
 Of her he loves, and never can forget,
 Loses in tears the far-receding shore;
 But not the thought that they must meet no more:
 Depriv'd of her and freedom at a blow,
 What has he left that he can yet forego?
 Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,
 He feels his body's bondage in his mind,
 Puts off his generous feelings, and to suit
 His manners to his fate, puts on the brute.

Some

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds
 A stream of lib'ral and heroic deeds:
 The swell of pity, not to be confin'd
 Within the scanty limits of the mind,
 Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,
 A rich deposit, on the bordering lands.
 These have an ear for *his* paternal call,
 Who makes some rich for the supply of all,
 GOD's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,
 And *Thornton* is familiar with the joy.

O could I worship aught beneath the skies,
 That earth hath seen, or fancy can devise,
 Thine altar, sacred liberty, should stand,
 Built by no mercenary, vulgar hand;
 With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair
 As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer-air,
 Daily, as ever on the mountain's height •
 The deep of morning shed a dawning light;
 Again, when evening in her sober vest
 Drew the gray curtain of the fading west;
 My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise
 For the chief blessings of my fairest days.
 But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,
 But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:
 Else I would say (and as I speak, bid fly
 A captive bird into the boundless sky)
 Th' UNITED STATES adore thee—thou art come
 From Sparta hither, and art here at home.
 We feel thy force still active, at this hour
 Enjoy immunity from priestly power;
 While conscience, happier than in ancient years,
 Owns no superior but the GOD she fears.

True charity, a plant divinely nurs'd,
 Fed by the love from which it rose at first,
 Thrives against hope, and in the rudest scene;
 Storms but enliven its unfading green.

Exub'rant

Exub'rant is the shadow it supplies,
 Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.
 To look at him who form'd us, and redeem'd,
 So glorious now, though once so disesteem'd;
 To see a GOD stretch forth a human hand
 T' uphold the boundless scenes of his command;
 To recollect that in a form like our's,
 He bruise'd beneath his feet th' infernal powers,
 Captivity led captive rose to claim
 The wreath he won so dearly, in our name;
 That thron'd above all height, he condescends
 To call the few that trust in him his friends;
 That in the heaven of heavens, that space he deems
 Too scanty for th' exertion of his beams,
 And shines as if impatient to bestow
 Life and a kingdom upon worms below:—
 That light imparts a never-dying flame,
 Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.
 Like him, the soul thus kindl'd from above,
 Spreads wide her arms of universal love,
 And still enlarg'd as she receives the grace,
 Includes creation in her close embrace.
 Behold a Christian—and without the fires
 The founder of that name alone inspires,
 Though all accomplishments, all knowledge meet,
 To make the shining prodigy complete,
 Whoever boasts that name, behold a cheat.

Thus have I fought to grace a serious lay
 With many a wild indeed, but flowery spray;
 In hopes to gain what else I must have lost,
 Th' attention pleasure has so much engross'd.
 But if unhappily deceiv'd I dream,
 And prove too weak for so divine a theme,
 Let Charity forgive me a mistake,
 That zeal, not vanity, has chanc'd to make,
 And spare the poet for the subject's sake.